

## Our wildlife refuges should be sanctuaries

National wildlife refuges are under the gun — literally. Recreational hunting is on the rise on our nation's wildlife refuges, which is a perverse use of these prime natural habitats and gross exploitation of their inhabitants.

The national wildlife refuge system has grown to encompass some 90 million acres since President Theodore Roosevelt established the first one in 1903. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintains these reservations, which were originally designed as sanctuaries for a host of wild plants and animals.

But since the 1960s — and largely unknown to the general public — the federal government has been quietly opening more and more tracks of refuge land to recreational hunters. In a very real sense, these sanctuaries are becoming killing fields.

The federal government and the Fish and Wildlife Service now view hunting on wildlife refuges as virtually standard operating procedure, and there has been a disturbing increase in the number of refuges open to hunting as well as the number of wildlife refuge hunters themselves. Moreover, this hunting is not even justified by the thinning of herds or flocks — most of it is purely for sport.

Of the nation's 435 refuges, 256 are now open to hunting and trapping. If current trends continue, we can expect to see even more habitat sanctuaries fall prey to the questionable practice of refuge hunting.

Five percent of the refuges' annual 27 million visitors come to hunt or trap. This percentage is up from recent years and more than likely will continue to rise.

The sanctity of the refuges is victim to both politics and wildlife management apathy. The federal government acquires refuge land, in part, through the sale of Duck Stamps — akin to hunting licenses — and all duck hunters are required by law to purchase them. Hunters of all types claim because they help finance refuges through licenses and Duck Stamp purchases, they are entitled to hunt on these wildlife sanctuaries.

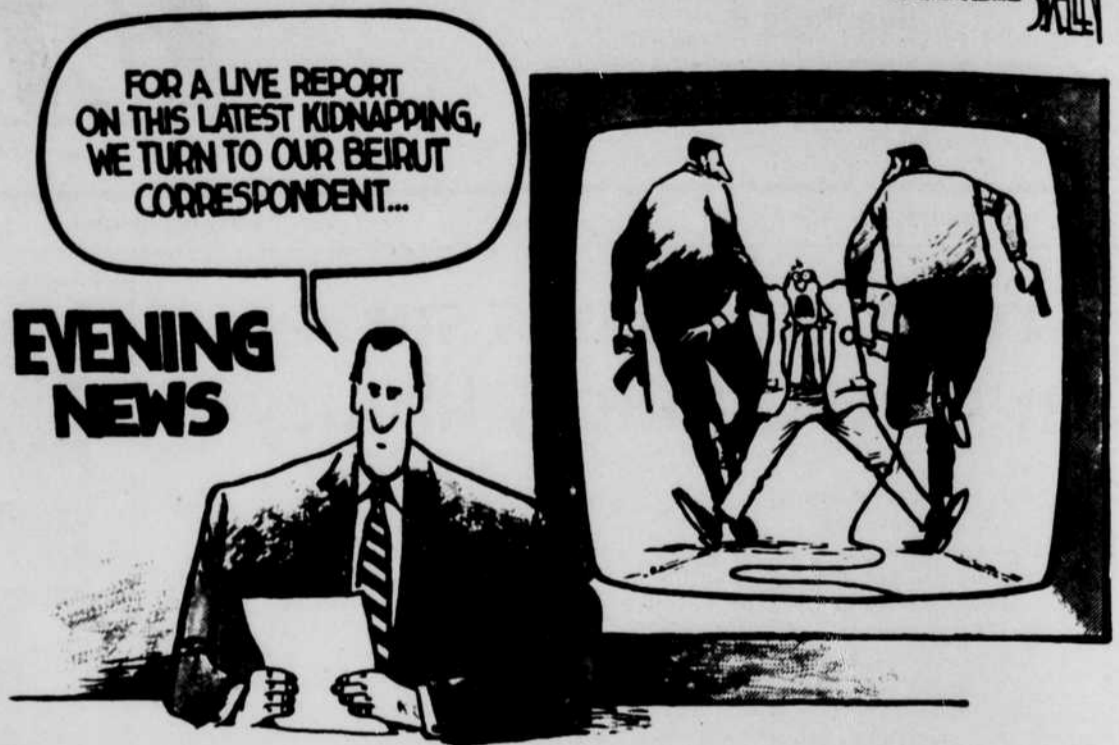
Hunters have increasingly used the National Rifle Association, a strong congressional lobbying group and political action committee, as a vehicle to get their demands met. Sadly, the tactic has worked.

Ironically, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is in many ways the refuges' worst enemy. Frank Dunkle, director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, views animals and birds as "renewable, exploitable resources" and places recreational opportunity over wildlife preservation.

Similarly, Assistant Interior Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, G. Ray Arnett, deems our nation's refuges as superior to any found in the world and believes the Fish and Wildlife Service has done its best to keep them that way.

Obviously, their best is not good enough. More than half of the nation's refuges fail to meet Theodore Roosevelt's conception of "inviolable sanctuaries."

As hunters through NRA lobbying press for increased refuge access, and complacency prevails in the ranks of the Fish and Wildlife Service, sanctuary hunting will continue, slowly defiling the few remaining spots where wildlife may tread unmolested by man's predations.



## Letters

### Statistics

Patrick Clancey's letter (ODE, Jan. 14) demonstrated a need to learn some more about current demographic trends, Darwin and Christianity. Wow, too bad there's a 250-word limit.

Well, I'll just encourage Patrick to read Darwin's book "The Descent of Man" and, you guessed it, the Bible. I believe what's written in the Bible concerning our origin, but there's a lot Darwin writes regarding human society and genetics from which one could learn some things.

As for demographics, the article "The Birth Dearth: The Geopolitical Consequences" (Public Opinion, Jan. 1986) is quite informative. Ben Wattenberg and Karl Zinsmeister deal with the problems that the extremely low birthrates in Western Europe and the United States will cause for our economy, social institutions and our position in the world (not to mention other devastating consequences). And this article doesn't even deal with population loss from AIDS.

Hey, Patrick, if you want other sources please check the recent demographic statistics listed by the World Bank. The industrialized nations are way below replacement birth levels.

Want more? Read George Gilder's work "The Sexual Revolution At Home," or some of the Wall Street Journal's articles on U.S. statistics published last September.

In conclusion, if we're so overpopulated, why are vast food surpluses the number one problem for U.S. farmers? Why is France now paying people generous bonuses for children? Why is West Germany considering similar proposals? And why is the Soviet block paying huge benefits to encourage large families?

**Michael Cross**  
Graduate, political science,  
history

kept secret until the end. Even I didn't know I was the false prophet.

And when considering words in the Bible, consider also their opposite meaning. For example, the sign of my back in the picture appearing in the Salem newspaper read, "And ye shall be hated of all women for my name's sake, Mark 13:13." The Bible says "men." And so believe it or not, the Bible gave us hell and will give us heaven, if you'll hear me out.

**Wayne L. Johnson**  
San Diego

### Comfort

In response to Bert Tryba's letter (ODE, Jan. 23), the issues he brings up seem somewhat infinite compared to the true doctrines and comfort received from the simple faith in Christ, or any other religion one chooses to believe in.

More important is the ignorance, or perhaps simple prejudice that Tryba chooses to include in justifying the "decline" of the general state of the United States.

There comes a point in most people's lives at which one must attempt to understand the surrounding world. Some of us hide behind "facts" that are actually estimates of what truly happened, while others have the social stability and confidence to believe in what we cannot "scientifically" prove.

Faith is simply being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see (from Hebrews 11). Tryba seems to have never felt the exhilaration of knowing what he feels is right.

Most of all, I feel sorry for Tryba in that he is missing a most invaluable part of life; the fulfillment of one's spiritual needs.

**Matt W. Burlingame**  
Biology

### 10 Heads

The world cannot hope for peace until Reagan is out. But he can't do otherwise, for he's programmed by God as I am. He's the seventh head of the beast in Rev. 17:7. The first was Eisenhower and his 10 cabinet positions (10 horns), which were later increased to 13.

Jesus's first coming was the period from Feb. 7, 1972 (a letter published in the Albany paper) to the culmination of Easter Sunday in 1977, which was a photo of me in the Salem paper as a protester on a downtown Salem street with a sign reading, "If all women stayed at home, we'd see: 1. Full employment, 2. No crime, 3. Jesus."

The period of time of the heads reign is 34 years, from November of 1952 to November of 1986, or one generation. So where the Bible refers to "this generation," that's the present one, which will soon end.

The "short space" for the seventh head means an incomplete term of office. Nixon was covered in Rev. 13:3, and the beast was healed with Gerald Ford. Revelation 17:16 relates to deficit spending. But that and the rest of the Bible must be understood in the context that all prophecy had to be

## Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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